

Message Text

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67

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

EB-07 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04 ITC-01

TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01 FEA-01 /090 W

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R 150740Z SEP 76

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 249

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, RP

SUBJECT: US-RP ECONOMIC NEGOTIATION: COCONUT OIL

1. PRESIDENT MARCOS REPORTEDLY STATED IN A SPEECH ON SEPT 14 THAT QUOTE IT IS MY INTENTION TO SEE TO IT THAT THE TREATMENT OF COCONUT OIL AND PALM OIL (IMPORTS TO THE US) WILL BE EQUALIZED; OTHERWISE, WE WILL NOT AGREE TO ANY TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE US. END QUOTE. THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS WERE MADE BEFORE A GROUP OF SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS SPONSORED BY THE PHILIPPINE COCONUT FEDERATION AND WERE WIDELY REPORTED IN FRONT PAGE ARTICLES BY GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED PRESS IN SEPT 15 MORNING EDITIONS.

2. THE BULLETIN TODAY QUOTED THE PRESIDENT AS SAYING: QUOTE ALL WE ASK IS JUSTICE. WE ARE NOT ASKING FOR AN UNUSUAL OR MORE FAVORED TREATMENT. THE UNITED STATES IS IMPOSING A TAX OF ONE PER CENT ON OUR COCONUT OIL IMPORTED INTO THE UNITED STATES. THEY DO NOT IMPOSE ANY DUTY ON PALM OIL. CERTAINLY, IF THERE IS EQUITY AND JUSTICE, AS WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO DO IN DEALING WITH FOREIGN PRODUCTS COMING INTO OUR COUNTRY, IF THERE IS ANY INTENTION TO TREAT OUR PRODUCTS EQUALLY WITH OTHERS, THEN

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LET US SEE TO IT THAT WE DO NOT PAY ANY MORE TARIFF

DUTY, OR IF WE ARE TO PAY THE ONE PER CENT PER POUND,
THEN LET THE OTHERS ALSO PAY ONE CENT A POUND. OTHER-
WISE, THERE WILL BE NO TRADE AGREEMENT. END QUOTE.

3. COMMENT: BROAD EXPOSURE GIVEN PRESIDENT'S RE-
MARKS IS IN LINE WITH MARCOS POLICY OF DIFFERENTIAT-
ING U.S. AND PHILIPPINE INTERESTS AND OF EMPHASIZING
PHILIPPINE CAPABILITY OF DEALING WITH US AS EQUAL ON
QUID PRO QUO BASIS. WHILE NONE OF THIS IS NEW,
FACT THAT THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF MADE THE STATEMENT
AND THE PUBLICITY WHICH STATEMENT SUBSEQUENTLY RECEIVED
REPRESENTS HARDENING OF GOP POSITION ON COCONUT OIL
AND SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT THE GOP IS ATTACHING IN-
CREASING IMPORTANCE TO AN ISSUE CENTRAL TO THE ECO-
NOMIC NEGOTIATIONS. SULLIVAN

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